



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
**THE AMBASSADOR'S FUND FOR  
CULTURAL PRESERVATION**  
CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

## INTRODUCTION

Created by the United States Congress in 2001, the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation provides grants to preserve historic sites, artifacts, manuscripts and museum collections as well as traditional forms of expression such as music, dance and language. Administered by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, the Ambassador's Fund has already provided nearly \$125,000 to support five significant preservation projects in Uzbekistan.

# Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation

*"In our efforts to  
assist in preserving  
the heritage of other  
cultures, we show  
our respect for  
them."*

U.S. Congress 2001

## SELECTION PROCESS

Cultural Preservation awards are based on the importance of the site, object or traditional form of expression to be preserved as well as the urgency of its preservation need. Government agencies, cultural organizations, educational institutions, NGOs and individuals can submit proposals. For each annual grant cycle, proposals must be submitted to the Embassy's Public Affairs Section. After reviewing the proposals, the Ambassador submits the most compelling ones to the State Department for final consideration. Awards are generally announced during the summer. For further information, including applications and program guidelines, please visit [www.exchanges.state.gov/culprop/afcp/](http://www.exchanges.state.gov/culprop/afcp/) and our website [uzbekistan.usembassy.gov](http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov).



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

### Protecting a Desert Fortress



Not far from the banks of the Amu Darya River near Termez are the remains of Kampir-Tepe, a vast complex dating from the post-Alexandrian period to the Kushan era (late 4th century B.C. to mid-2nd century A.D.). Discovered some 35 years ago, the famous Uzbek archaeologist and Academician of the Academy of Sciences, Dr. Edvard Vasilievich Rtveladze, has excavated nearly 15 hectares of the site, unearthing military fortifications, a citadel, dwellings, a port and even a religious complex thought to be dedicated to Zoroastrian ceremonies. This work has helped shed light on the economic, cultural and political structures of a significant Central Asian culture.

In 2005, Dr. Rtveladze received a Cultural Preservation grant to help preserve and protect the excavated areas of this significant site. He also received funds to document the artifacts he and his team discovered there. Working with local officials, he hopes to eventually open the site to tourists and scholars as a museum complex.

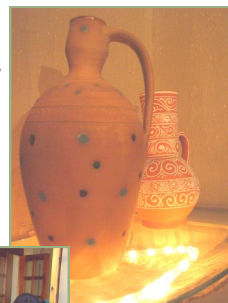
## Recreating Secrets from the Past

Pottery has long played a significant role in Uzbekistan as both a vehicle for artistic and technological expression as well as an item of commerce. Yet from region to region and century to century, decorative styles and manufacturing techniques have changed. Sometimes over the ages, the secrets of a particular glaze or the

proper temperature for firing a certain type of clay have been lost. Akbar Rakhimov and his son, Alisher, are trying to preserve this rich history of Uzbek pottery, recreating ancient techniques, utilizing traditional glazes and materials, and adopting and adapting time-honored decorative styles.

Recently, the Rakhimovs – two more generations in a long line of Uzbek master potters – opened a school in Tashkent to share their techniques with students and masters alike. They

used their 2004 Ambassador's Cultural Preservation Fund grant to help equip their state-of-the-art workshops.



## Preserving Qurans



Samarkand's Cultural History Museum houses one of the most important collections of Central Asian arts, artifacts and manuscripts in the world. Among its treasures are some 20 Qurans. Dating from the 11th to the 20th century, the Qurans are tangible reminders of the artistic heights reached during the great flowering of Islamic culture in Central Asia.

The Museum not only wanted to preserve these ancient texts, it wanted to make sure that visitors had the opportunity to admire their fine bindings and impressive calligraphy and decoration. It was able to accomplish both goals with a Cultural Preservation grant awarded in 2002. Part of the grant was used to conserve the texts; part was used to construct special climate controlled exhibition stands to

house the books, and part was used to update documentary materials.

## Allowing Scholars Access to Historic Texts

The Abu Rayhan Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies in Tashkent maintains a collection of more than 25,000 manuscripts dating from the 17th century and 15,000 volumes of lithographic works documenting the history of Central Asia. Reprints of works by such distinguished scholars as Abu Nasr Farabi, Abu Rayhan Beruni and Abu Ali Ibn Sina are included in the collection. Sadly, though, many of these historic items are deteriorating. As a result, the Institute had to limit scholars' access to the materials for fear of exacerbating the damage.

*"And one of the best ways we can deepen our friendships with the people of all countries is for us to better understand each other's cultures"*  
Laura Bush

Balancing the need for the Institute to preserve the texts and the need for scholars to have access to them, the Institute applied for and received a Cultural Preservation grant in 2001. The grant allowed the Institute to preserve the most valuable or significantly deteriorated items and to microfilm or photocopy the entire collection. Now scholars from around the world can access the materials without hastening their decline.

## Showcasing Afrosiab

Once a major city along the Central Asian trade routes, Afrosiab disappeared after the Mongol invasions of the 12th century A.D. What scholars know of this ancient civilization is based largely on recent excavations of Afrosiab (located near Samarkand) and artifacts tucked away in the storerooms of Samarkand's Afrosiab Museum. Many of the artifacts, including a unique 7th century A.D. mural from the Varkhuman Palace, need to be reconstructed or preserved before they can be exhibited to the general public.

The Afrosiab Museum was the recipient of a 2006 Cultural Preservation grant. It is in the process of using the funds to preserve the collection and to purchase climate controlled display cases for its redesigned installation.

